1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

Although the novices are expected to share the hardships of the journey, they are guarded from actual physical danger. The loss of a novice reflects upon the leadership of the raid, for the youth is under the protection of ritual and is present primarily for experience.

But raiding in enemy country is hazardous work at best, and sometimes the raiders, when they go forward on a particularly dangerous mission, must leave the novice at a distance so that he will not be drawn into battle. Then, if they encounter difficulties or superior forces, they may be unable to reach him again. Novices deserted in this way have perished or have suffered great hardship before reaching their homes.

Not all boys who begin this apprenticeship pass through it successfully. "If a boy is unreliable and doesn't show improvement, they don't take him out any more. They just drop him."

No special raiding parties are organized for the convenience of the novice. "The boys are taken on when there is trouble and many raids take place; then they get through in a hurry." Depending upon the needs of the encampments and the state of intertribal relations, as much as a year may elapse between the first and the fourth journeys.

Unless there is sharp criticism of the young man's conduct on the last journey, when he returns home he belongs to the ranks of the men. Of him it is said, "He has just moved up to adulthood": "It means that he has arrived at the point where he is a real man. He doesn't have to stay at home. He is free to do what he will and to have his own views. He can smoke now, and he can marry."

When the next raid or war party is announced, this new adult may participate in the war dance and commit himself to the undertaking on a different basis: "The fifth time the restrictions are off; there are no obligations to rule the young men. After the first four trips, after the apprenticeship, these youths are put first in battle to try them out. The fifth time out they are expected to be in the front ranks."

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584 In the old days it was considered shameful to go openly with a girl. If a man liked a girl, he would try to put himself in her way as much as possible without attracting notice. He would try to get to every social dance that she went to. That was the Chiricahua substitute for taking a girl out. It gave the young people a chance to meet. It gave the girl a chance to show whom she liked. If a girl chose the same man for a partner many times, you could be sure that that couple might get married. If a boy liked a girl and she showed him attention in this way, he might go to his father or his uncle or some other close relative and ask if he would try to arrange a marriage. Sometimes the boy would be turned down and sometimes not; he never knew.

D. is going through this stage now. He is in love with S.'s daughter. . . . . He doesn't do anything. He just goes to the store when he thinks she'll be there. He gets in a word or two. Then he goes one way and she goes another. He'll be watching every few minutes from the other side of the canyon. Pretty soon she'll come for water. He will be watching and will come to the place by a roundabout way, timing it to get there while she's there. Then he'll get in a couple of more words. Later she'll find some excuse to go off somewhere where he is, and so on.

Many understandings are reached following a military triumph. This is the time when spirits are high and when young men have won a stake which permits them to join the ranks of the suitors. "The Chiricahua turned their victories into a celebration, a dancing and marrying time. Lots of young men took advantage of the occasion."

[885] [882] [927]

583 602 The etiquette regulating the conduct of the married man and his wife's relatives makes elopement almost an impossibility. When it occurs, the affront to the girl's family is so serious that the offending couple is forced to live in isolation unless forgiveness and approval can be secured. "There are few cases of elopement. A girl who is not trained right might elope. Usually the couple doesn't come back to the girl's folks to live then but makes a camp apart."

[626] [591]

832 826 But, even though their parents and relatives have much to say about the choice of a mate, the young people have their own standards of beauty and desirability and their own ways of influencing the issue. Concerning the physical traits in a girl which excite most admiration, and those which are least well considered, the following pronouncement is typical:

Girls with big lips, or a big nose, or with skin too dark; who are stooped or have big feet; who have a Roman nose or one too wide, or who have too long a